

Weaving the Word

Don't Worry, Be Faithful

Part 46 – September 27, 2015

Welcome to where we count the cost to follow the One who paid the price



What do you tend to worry about? Money? Relationships? Money? Future? Money? **Does money enhance us or ensnare us?**

On average, **the lower the household income the higher the percentage of charitable giving.** And statistically, **as wealth increases, compassion, kindness, and charity decreases.**



Paul Piff, a psychologist at Berkeley, has conducted social experiments that he explains on a TED talk called, “Does money make you mean?”

They found that **the more expensive the car, the less likely it'll stop for a pedestrian.** They could turn most Monopoly players into poorer sports by giving ‘em twice the money. The higher the tax bracket, the less likely to share \$10 worth of giveaways with a stranger. And, **the richer someone felt, the more likely they were to take candy they knew was reserved for children in a developmental lab.** They stole candy from special needs children!



It's now a scientifically documented fact: **Money makes us jerks.** If we're not on guard. But *an hour* after watching a **46 SECOND** video on child poverty leveled the stats.



We just need to get our eyes off ourselves for a minute.

We're following Jesus' journey from baptism to resurrection. And, we're currently weaving in His Sermon on the Mount, where He instructs His newly appointed, mostly teenage¹, apprentices².



Including Peter, Andy, Jim, and John.

When we left off, Jesus said that **a good eye is single in focus and brings in light;** but **a bad eye is blind to true treasure and stores up trash.** Jesus uses the idea of **double-vision** the same way James uses **double-mindedness.** (James 1:8)

¹ The age of Jesus' chosen 12 is discussed in detail in the sermon “God as My Witness” (March 8, 2015)

² Both Luke (6:13-20) and Matthew (5:1-2) specifically state that Jesus is teaching His 12 disciples.



And now He warns ‘em to focus on One Master.

“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. **[For example]** You cannot serve both **God** [as fishers of men] and **Money** [as fishers of fish].” (Mat 6:24)



Jesus personifies money as a master, which is why the NIV capitalizes it. But, His point isn’t money. It’s *moonlighting*. **Jesus won’t settle for a part-time apprentice.**

He called Peter, Andy, Jim, and John, to leave their nets and become fishers of men. (Mark 1:16-20; Mat 4:18-22) So they made Him their Master/Rabbi/Teacher, and joined hundreds of others for about a year.



They ended up so hungry they ate raw grain while passing through a field on a Sabbath. (Mark 2:23) Then Jesus had a man stretch out his withered hand, and healed him on the Sabbath, which was followed by an ugly religious showdown in the synagogue. (Mark 3:1)



Under threat of murder, **Jesus returned to where He called Peter, Andy, Jim, and John and they returned to being fishers of fish**, and left Jesus with the crushing crowd to fend for Himself. (Mark 3:9-10) Instead of tending to Jesus, they tended their nets, until Jesus borrows Simon-Peter’s boat and asks him to throw out his washed and folded net.



Simon [i.e. Peter] answered, “**Master**, [epistatēs: any sort of generic overseer] we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets.” – Luke 5:5 NIV

And then, the miraculous catch. God isn’t against earthly prosperity.

Wealth and honor *come* from you ... - 1 Chronicles 29:12 NIV



Jesus doesn’t say we can’t serve God and *make money*; He just says we can’t serve God and make money ... *our master*. That’s why we got’a secure ‘M in the lower case! *Don’t trust ‘M.*

And, how do we know when they’re in the upper case? We worry!

Therefore [keeping in mind that “no one can serve two masters”] **I tell you**, [Get ready: this is a command:] **do not worry about** [merimnaō: troubled with cares for] **your life**, [psychē: lit. breath; soul; mind; heart (your inner self)] [as it pertains to] **what you will eat or drink** [the needs of your flesh]; or [for that matter] about **your body**, [sōma: flesh (the outer self that contains your inner self)] [as it pertains to] **what you will wear**. Is not **life** [your inner self] more important than **food**, [The inner self needs the “Bread of Life”] and the **body** [your outer self] more important than **clothes**? [After all, they only cover the curse of nakedness] (Mat 6:25)



He doesn't say life *isn't* about food and clothes; but, it's "more important than food" and "than clothes". We *have to* eat, and we can't run around naked ... *and not get a cold ... or arrested!*

Worry is refusing to surrender a situation to God's control. Which is silly. But **worry allows us to hold onto an imaginary sense of control over the unknown, unfamiliar, and uncontrollable.**

That's what Satan used to tempt Adam and Eve, back when you *could run around naked*, (Gen 3:5) and *unashamed*. Well, they sure ruined that!

Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet **your heavenly Father feeds them**. [They still work for it; they just never worry about it] Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single **hour** [pēchys: lit. *cubit; arm-span; from elbow to fingertip*] to his **life**? [hēlikia: *stature; age*] [It's an odd saying] (Mat 6:26-27)

Hey! They just saw *Jesus* add a *single cubit*, an *arm-span*, to the stature of that man who stretched out his withered hand in *faith!*



And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. [He's referring to a flower that covered the fields of Galilee in royal reds and purples] Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor [i.e. *glory*] was dressed like one of these. [Solomon's royal robes only covered his nakedness; the glory of the flowers is designed into their *unashamed nakedness*] If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, **will he not much more clothe you**, O you of little faith? (Mat 6:28-30)



If even King Solomon couldn't be clothed in the glory of the grass, how is it that God will "much more" clothe us? **He didn't come to cover our curse; He came to cure it!** "*Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ*". (Rom 13:14) **He restored our heavenly glory so we can stand in His presence.**

Like the grass, we all end up in God's all-consuming holiness. (Deut 4:24) But, **when the darkness burns away, we'll be clothed in naked, unashamed, fireproof, glory!**

He doesn't promise to meet our immediate needs as we perceive 'em, but our eternal needs as only He can know 'em! While Paul was *in prison*, he not only wrote: "*Worry about nothing; pray about everything.*" (Phil 4:6) And, he also wrote that ...

I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, **to live is Christ** and **to die is gain**. – Philippians 1:20-21 NIV

Christ. Not religion. Not a mission. A person. Jesus.

Fill in this blank: For *me*, to live is _____ ... *what?* Career? Clothes? Family? Money? Power? Sports? Popularity? Sex? Now, fill in *this*: and to die is _____ ... *what?* Because, *this* is the *crucial one!* If your first answer isn't Christ, your second answer is *loss*.

So do not worry, saying, [Jesus now imitates what He heard His apprentices saying] 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' (Mat 6:31)

That's why they went back to being fishers of fish. How far in the lake did the crushing crowd force Jesus before He finally said, "*Can someone give me a hand here?*" **All night without a bite reminds 'em who isn't in control. And Jesus' command to cast their nets reminds 'em who is!**

When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, **Lord**; [This is no generic term! *kyrios: Lord*; a title of reverence with which servants greet their master] I am a sinful man!" – Luke 5:8 NIV

And Jesus says, "Hello, Simon. It's nice to have you back. Why don't you leave this mess of fish and follow Me ... *again.*" And went up the hill, where He appointed twelve, starting with Peter, Andy, Jim, and John. (Mat 10:2) And they left that valuable catch on the shore, with the hungry, crushing, crowd below. Rushing. Shoving. Pushing. Grabbing.

For the pagans run after all these things, [ignorant of the heart of their loving Creator-Father] and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. (Mat 6:32)

So, will you focus on the greatness of your need or your Savior? True faith trusts that God has defined my needs, and is meeting them, according to His eternal plan and my eternal best.

But seek first his **kingdom** [True Bread broken for you and True Wine poured out for you by your Servant-Master] and his **righteousness**, [Glorious, un-naked, fiery-presence, clothing] and **all these things will be given to you as well**. (Mat 6:33)

Which doesn't mean we won't hunger for food-food, or find ourselves in need of new clothes-clothes, **it means our eye is staying on the One whose eye is always on our eternal best.**

Therefore **do not worry** [i.e. troubled yourself with cares] **about tomorrow**, [aurion: lit. the morning air] [it'll be there bright and early without your help] **for tomorrow will worry about itself**. [It can take care of itself] (Mat 6:34a)

Don't let money frighten you from your true calling and created purpose. Focus on what's important today, in a God-honoring way.

Each day has enough trouble of its own." (Mat 6:34b)

They have *no idea*. Just a few more lessons and they'll leave the hillside, and face two years of unrelenting daily trials! **Their faith will be tested in every way imaginable.** And, **each test will pose the same challenge: Which Master will you serve?** The One who clothes you with glory, offers eternal treasure, and transforms you into His image through His own body and blood?

Or, the one that turns you into a jerk? *Scientifically speaking.*